

REMARKS

This is responsive to the Office Action dated January 6, 2004 which has been carefully considered. Claims 1-4 and 5-6 and 8 are allowed. Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as stated at pages 2-3 of the Office Action.

Claim 7 has been amended to overcome the rejections. It is now deemed to be allowable.

Claim 8 has been amended to correct a typographical error pointed out by the Examiner in the Office Action of January 6, 2004.


Attorneys for applicant also attach a copy of the amended claims showing the changes made therein as a courtesy.

Attached to this amendment is a duly signed and dated supplemental declaration by the inventor.

As requested by the Examiner in the January 4 Office Action also enclosed is the original Letters Patent.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application; however, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
COHEN, PONTANI, LIEBERMAN & PAVANE

By 
Thomas C. Pontani
Reg. No. 29,763
551 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1210
New York, New York 10176
(212) 687-2770

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7. (amended) The friction clutch of claim 5, wherein ~~said membrane spring comprises a first material; said first material has a first resistance to thermal conductivity; said pressure plate comprises a second material; said second material has a second resistance to thermal conductivity; said metal of said insulating member has a third resistance to thermal conductivity; and the third resistance to thermal conductivity is greater than at least one of the first resistance to thermal conductivity and the second resistance to thermal conductivity~~ the pressure plate has a third resistance to thermal conductivity, said first resistance to thermal conductivity being higher than at least the second and the third resistance.

8. (4x amended) A single disc friction clutch for a motor vehicle, said friction clutch comprising:

a clutch housing;

a clutch disc;

said single clutch disc being configured to be mounted on a transmission input shaft having a longitudinal axis;

said single clutch disc being configured to be axially movable along the longitudinal axis of a transmission input shaft;

a pressure plate;

at least one friction lining mounted on said clutch disc;

said at least one friction lining being configured to be disposed between said pressure plate and a flywheel;

said pressure plate being configured and disposed to engage and disengage said clutch disc with a flywheel;

said pressure plate being configured and disposed to be axially movable along the longitudinal axis of a transmission input shaft;

a membrane spring;

said membrane spring being disposed between said clutch housing and said pressure plate;

said membrane spring being configured and disposed to bias said pressure plate;

said pressure plate comprising a first portion and a second portion;

said first portion of said pressure plate being disposed to contact said clutch disc;

said second portion of said pressure plate being disposed away from said clutch disc and having a radial length;

a thermal insulating member being configured to minimize heat conduction from said pressure plate to said membrane spring;

said pressure plate having a protrusion extending axially in the direction of said membrane spring;

said insulating member being disposed at said protrusion between said membrane spring and said first portion of said pressure plate and forming an insulating layer in contact with and along said length of said second portion;

said second portion of said pressure plate forming part of said protrusion and being disposed between said insulating member and said membrane spring to contact said membrane spring;

said insulating member being rigid and comprising a metal and being a single, one-piece element extending circumferentially ~~above~~ about said pressure plate;

said metal of said insulating member being configured to minimize heat conduction from said first portion of said pressure plate to said membrane spring to minimize distortion of said membrane spring from thermal conduction of heat from said pressure plate to said membrane spring.